



This week's stories from the media

- How a group of mums saved their school
- SA teachers told to prepare for second wave of online learning
- Screen time and testing standards hurting future teachers
- Covid school leavers are amazing say leaders
- Schools score extra funds for year 7 prep
- Women outnumber men at uni, but earn less when they leave
- We need a new childcare system that doesn't punish women

SA Told To Prepare For Second Wave

Public school teachers have been ordered to start planning in advance for a possible return to home schooling amid fears the resurgence of COVID-19 in Melbourne could make its way to South Australia.

South Australia's Education Department is now taking precautionary action in case a coronavirus resurgence makes its way across the border.

System improvement director Ben Temperly said a reminder was issued to teachers to have a 2-week block of learning prepared as "contingency against a site closure".

"South Australians have done a brilliant job at containing the virus so far but as we have seen in Victoria the situation can change very quickly," he said.

Meanwhile, Education Minister John Gardner today heralded the start of Term 3 by claiming there was "no better place to be in the world right now than South Australia", due to the work of health officials to slow the spread of COVID-19.

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How A Group Of Mums Saved Their School

When an Adelaide high school was earmarked for closure, a group of mums got angry. Then they got busy. They won their battle, and say there are lessons for anyone.

Diana Smith-McCue and Katrina Bean are self-described "middle-class suburban mums", and never saw themselves as activists.

But activists is exactly what they became as they rallied around a high school, slated for closure.

Suddenly they, and the other mums and grandparents, had to schedule in time for designing placards, writing to politicians and rallying on the steps of Parliament in between raising children and working busy jobs.

But it worked – the closure of Springbank College is now off the agenda – and the pair says there are many lessons for other "middle-class suburban mums" who might feel like they're getting a rough deal from those in power.

Ms Smith-McCue and Ms Bean both chose Springbank for different reasons. For Ms Bean's son Levi, who is on the autism spectrum, Springbank had been a revelation.

Both mums were also attracted to the small size of the school, which currently has just over 200 students, and the nurturing and attentive atmosphere that this allowed.

So they were shocked when in March their children came home from school and said the media were gathered at the school to report on its impending closure. The press, it appeared, had been notified before the parents.

Rather than accept that their school was going to close Ms Smith-McCue, Ms Bean and a cohort of other mostly mums, with a few grandparents in the mix, decided it was time to harness their parent power.

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Screen Time & Testing Standards Hurting Future Teachers

The nation’s school principals are concerned nearly 10% of aspiring teachers are failing to meet literacy and numeracy benchmarks, saying struggling teaching students need to be identified earlier and they are being damaged by increased screen time.

The Australian revealed on Monday new results from the 2019 Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education (LANTITE) show 9.3% of students failed the numeracy benchmark, and 8.3% failed in literacy.

Peak bodies for the nation’s primary and high school chiefs say the results need to be taken seriously by universities and governments.

Andrew Pierpoint said on Monday the latest LANTITE results indicated literacy and numeracy were becoming a bigger issue as more tech-dependent young people enter the teaching ranks.

“We shouldn’t have a bottom on the seats approach with the initial education courses ... we need to promote teaching as a really important profession and attract our best performers.”

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Covid School Leavers Are Amazing

This year’s school-leavers are being celebrated as a resilient, determined and insightful cohort of students who are intelligent, articulate, committed to social justice – and kind above all else.

THE final year of school is always memorable but for the 2020 cohort, it will go down as one in which its students shone in the face of unprecedented challenge and uncertainty.

Catholic Education SA deputy director John Mula says he is incredibly proud of young people in 2020.

“Young people today have a strong sense of social justice, - perhaps much stronger than - generations before them, despite living in a culture that values the individual,” he said.

South Australia’s Commissioner for Children and Young People, Helen Connolly, agrees.

“I think they are an amazing generation - they are articulate, insightful, intelligent and worldly with a pragmatic optimism,” she said.

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Schools Score Extra Year 7 Funds

The Fleurieu Peninsula’s public schools which cater for high-school students will receive more money to prepare for the transition of year 7s in 2022.

Victor Harbor High School is the biggest winner collecting \$105,000.

Yankalilla Area School gets \$30,000, Willunga High School and Mount Compass School both scored \$14,000, and Eastern Fleurieu School gets \$12,000.

The money is to update learning facilities and equipment, preparing outdoor spaces or purchasing furniture and textbooks.

Victor Harbor High School principal Amanda O’Shea was excited to have up to seven classes of year 7s joining the cohort.

[Full Story](#)

More Women At Uni But Earn Less

Yes, women outnumber men at university. But they still earn less after they leave.

Female enrolments went from one in three at the beginning of the 1970s to reaching parity just over a decade later.

In 1987, for the first time, women made up the majority of enrolments - now, they make up 55.5%.

But besides these gains being made in higher education, a fundamental unfairness remains: while women value education more highly, and see it as a strategy for economic security, men still outperform women after they graduate in terms of both salary and seniority.

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We Need A New Childcare System

In previous recessions larger numbers of men than women lost their jobs. This reflected realities at that time.

Recent payroll statistics show both men and women are losing their jobs in the pandemic, although women were particularly hard hit in its early stages.

Statistics suggest during COVID-19, more women than men are reporting heavier caring responsibilities, both for children and adults, as well as housework.

Now, the pre-existing complex system of childcare subsidies has been reinstated and parents will once again be charged fees.

This means that, in many cases, women working additional days or taking additional shifts are financially worse off.

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